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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/602,711	06/25/2003	Wayne M. Blackwell	FS-00887	9978

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McGuireWoods LLP,
Suite 1800
1750 Tysons Boulevard
Tysons Corner
McLean, VA 22102-4215

EXAMINER

ADAMS, GREGORY W

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3652

DATE MAILED: 03/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/602,711

Applicant(s)

BLACKWELL ET AL.

Examiner

Gregory W. Adams

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/25/03</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lilley (US 5,865,590).

3. With respect to claim 25, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a control system for loading packages including a module 12 to detect container full and tilt, detect container position, and controls container movement.

4. With respect to claim 26, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a positional sensor. Col. 5, Ins. 7-9.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lilley (US 5,865,590) in view of Smith (US 4,534,156) (cited by applicant).

7. With respect to claim 1, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses an apparatus for loading mail objects 1 comprising a bucket assembly 3, 4 which holds a container 3,

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actuator system 7, 8, 9, 10, feedback control system 12 (col. 12-16) to detect bucket position. Lilley does not disclose a fill sensor to detect fill capacity. Referring to FIGS. 1-4 Smith discloses a fill sensor 40 (col. 3, Ins. 35-38), 50 to detect fill capacity (col. 3, Ins. 52-56). Smith teaches that fill sensors increase loading speeds to 150 containers per hour, thereby reducing labor costs. Col. 1, Ins. 5-15. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add fill sensor to the apparatus of Lilley for loading mail objects into a container, as per the teachings of Smith, such that loading speeds are increased, thereby reducing labor costs.

8. With respect to claims 2-9, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a positioning sensor (col. 5, Ins. 7-9) minimizing damage to packages or other mail objects, bucket assembly 3, 4 which has an open side 15, safety sensor 28, 29 on actuator 7, 8, 9, 10, additional positional sensor, bucket assembly 3, 4 which has upright and down position I, chute sensor (col. 5, Ins. 7-9), and a cradle assembly 4 coupled to an actuator 7, 8, 9, 10.

9. With respect to claim 10, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a cradle assembly 4 which further includes a cradle shaft 58, 59 coupled to a mounting system 37, 38 of a frame assembly 37, 38.

10. With respect to claim 11, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a cradle assembly 4 which further includes lift ribs 36 coupled to a mount assembly 37, 38.

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11. With respect to claim 12, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses an actuator system 7, 8, 9, 10 is a hydraulic system 7, 8, 9, 10 air cylinder and screw-type system 7, 8, 9, 10.

12. With respect to claim 13, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses an actuator system 7, 8, 9, 10 includes a linkage system 4.

13. With respect to claim 14, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a bucket assembly 3, 4 includes a floor assembly 3, 4 and a rear wall assembly 3, 4.

14. With respect to claim 15, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a raised coplanar surface 3, 4 permits packages to be introduced into a half-sized container 3, 4.

15. With respect to claim 16, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a positional feedback system 12 (col. 12-16).

16. With respect to claim 17, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a loading system 1 comprising a transporting and sorting system including an induction mechanism, chute 14, bucket assembly 3, 4 to hold a container 3, actuator system 7, 8, 9, 10, and a feedback control system 12 (col. 12-16). Lilley does not include a sensor to sense fill. Referring to FIGS. 1-4 Smith discloses a fill sensor 40 (col. 3, Ins. 35-38), 50 to detect fill capacity (col. 3, Ins. 52-56). Smith teaches that fill sensors increase loading speeds to 150 containers per hour, thereby reducing labor costs. Col. 1, Ins. 5-15. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add fill sensor to the apparatus of Lilley for loading mail objects into a container, as per the teachings of Smith, such that loading speeds are increased, thereby reducing labor costs.

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17. With respect to claims 18-20, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a sensor (col. 5, Ins. 7-9) to sense positioning, safety sensor 28, 29, additional sensor, chute sensor (col. 5, Ins. 7-9), feedback control system position sensors (col. 5, Ins. 7-9) and controller 12 (col. 5, Ins. 7-9).

18. With respect to claims 21-22, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses a method for loading packages including placing a container (col. 4, Ins. 64-67), indexing a container (col. 5, Ins. 1-11), detecting full container at intermediate tilt II (col. 5, Ins. 12-21), and indexing container to upright (col. 5, Ins. 12-21). Lilley does not disclose detecting when a container is full. Referring to FIGS. 1-4 Smith discloses detecting when a container is full. Col. 3, Ins. 35-56. Smith teaches that fill sensors increase loading speeds to 150 containers per hour, thereby reducing labor costs. Col. 1, Ins. 5-15. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add fill sensor to the apparatus of Lilley for loading mail objects into a container, as per the teachings of Smith, such that loading speeds are increased, thereby reducing labor costs.

19. With respect to claim 23, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses detecting container proper positioning col. 5, Ins. 12-21.

20. With respect to claim 24, referring to FIGS. 1-10 Lilley discloses detecting problems and stopping. Col. 5, Ins. 12-21.

Conclusion

21. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US 2001/0012482 to Vezina
US 2002/0122714 to Derby et al.
US 2,962,172 to Fath et al.
US 3,602,383 to Howat
US 3,717,270 to Rooke et al.
US 5,558,485 to Haynes
US 5,632,589 to Bray et al.
US 5,992,186 to Fesmire et al.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gregory W. Adams whose telephone number is (703) 305-0555. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen D. Lillis can be reached on (703) 308-3248. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

gwa


EILEEN D. LILLIS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600